

Station 31 Task Force Meeting
December 19, 2003

Chief Ken Tipler reviewed the status of the data collection effort for all fire department members who have worked at Station 31 since 1975. Transcription of daybooks from 1975-1991 is complete and data validation is now underway. A computerized file of members since 1992 will be ready Monday, December 22nd. The 2 files will then be merged and the final database created. The project should be complete by the end of December/beginning of January.

Andrew Lofton reported on the site visit by Thomas Hales, MD, MPH, senior epidemiologist from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Dr. Hales visited Seattle on December 18th in response to queries from both the Fire Department and Local 27. Dr. Hales toured Station 31, heard the presentation of the industrial hygiene study findings at the station and spent time talking with Station 31 firefighters, and involved members of Local 27, the fire department, the city and the health department. Dr. Hales commended the work done to-date and expressed confidence in the process that has been set up to address Station 31 health concerns. As requested by the taskforce, he will continue to stay abreast of the investigation by serving as a reviewer of the work of the two expert panels. In the next few weeks, Dr. Hales will forward a summary letter detailing his observations and recommendations.

Chief Ken Tipler gave an update on the State Labor and Industries investigation regarding Station 31 concerns. Interviews are currently being conducted with involved parties. A report is expected at the end of February.

Dennis Karl inquired about the status of the \$150,000 budget set aside for this work. A budget summary will be provided at the next meeting.

David Chawes from Prezant Associates gave an update on the industrial hygiene study. The bulk of the work is now complete and final reports were distributed. Based on Prezant's findings, the overall building is safe. A few areas were called out as needing attention including lead remediation in the basement, sealing of the brick walls with a non- or low-volatile organic compound sealant, pesticide remediation, removal of fluorescent light ballasts containing PCBs and further investigation of VOCs in the open dirt area of the basement. The final report will be posted on the Station 31 web site and people who have contacted the hotline will be notified about the posting. There was also discussion about reporting and celebrating the fact that the building is safe in a joint statement from the Mayor's Office and Local 27. This will be pursued after the holidays.

Maggie McDonald reported on the work of the expert panels. The Medical Testing Advisory panel is reviewing an information piece about medical

screening for Station 31 members. They will meet on January 5th to hear the results of the industrial hygiene study and determine next steps.

The epidemiological study advisory panel is awaiting the database of Station 31 members. In addition, an epidemiologist based at the State Department of Health has been identified to conduct the analysis.

The next Task Force meeting is scheduled for January 30, 2004 at 1 pm.